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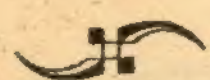


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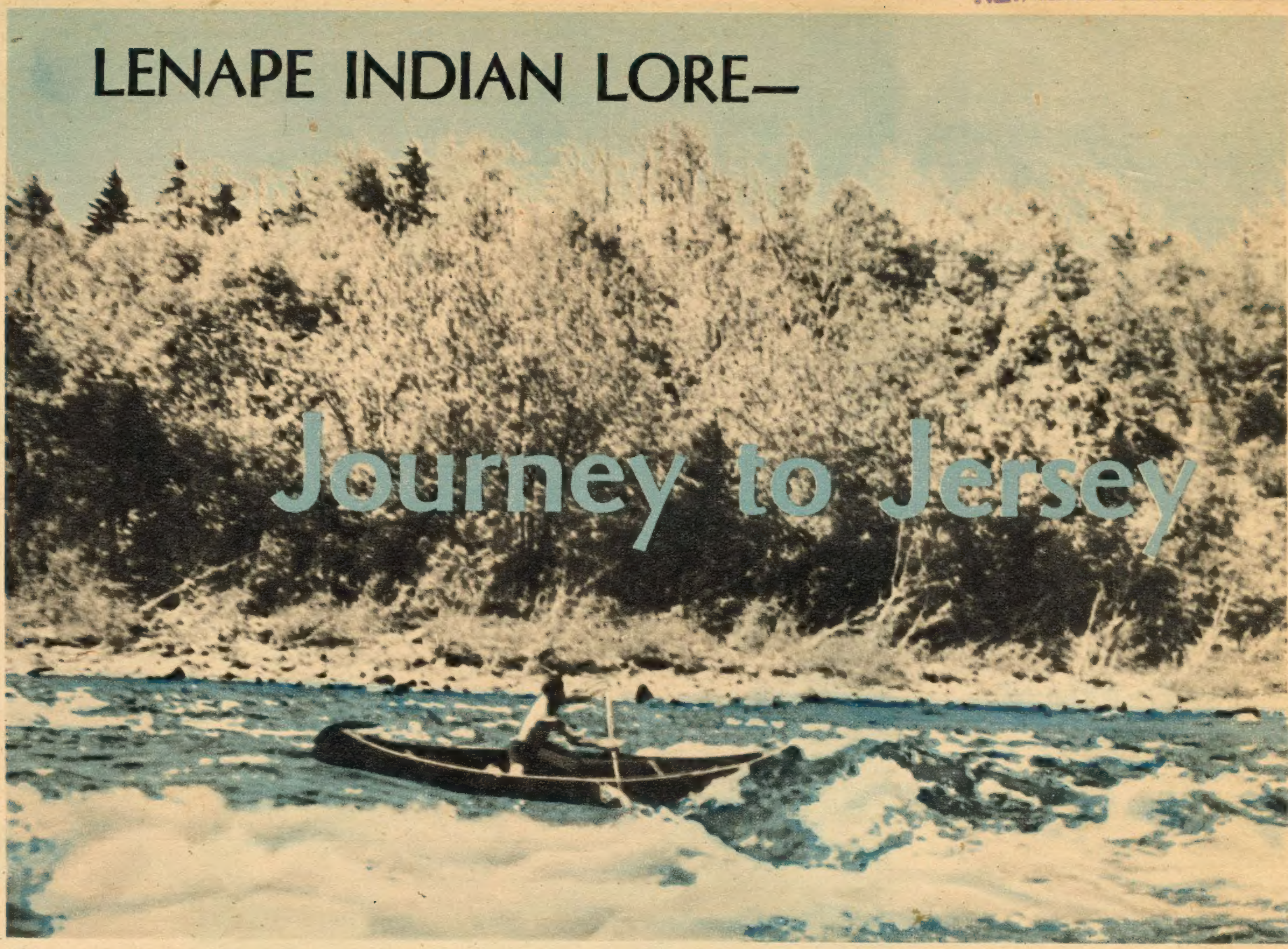
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LENAPE INDIAN LORE—

Journey to Jersey



Indians once used Delaware rapids to indicate their tribal boundaries. (Photo from N. J. Council.)

NOT many Indian tribes of the United States have a background so sharply etched as the Delawares or Lenapes who inhabited New Jersey before the white man. Their history is embodied in a pictographic epic called the Walam Olum or red score which was recorded in picture writing etched in red on white birch bark.

This record was discovered by a French scientist, Constantine Samuel Rafinesque, and published in a book written by him under the title of "The American Nations." He translated the characters and there is presented in this book the earliest account of Jersey's Indians. Rafinesque calls this record the "Linapi Annals." An abridged recital of it runs as follows:

A long time ago the Lenapes came from a far distant country. They passed over a glassy sea and then came into the region of caves. In their journey to the land of the Rising Sun their next habitation was the land of the buffalo. As they ventured onward they came to the Great Water where there was a division among their people. Some went to the northward and others to the southward. Those who went to the

This is the second in a series of articles about the Indians who once populated this state, written especially for The Newark Sunday News Magazine by Charles A. Philhower, authority on Indian lore. In subsequent articles Mr. Philhower will tell how the Lenni Lenape tribes lived, stalked game and cultivated food. He also will reveal their struggles with the white man and explain how their relics interpret Indian culture.

Trip on 'Glassy Sea' Traced in Pictograph

BY CHARLES A. PHILHOWER

northward came to the Land of the Rising Sun in a cold country and those who went to the southward crossed over the Naemissisipu after they conquered the snakes, the Allegewe, and proceeded southward to the cornland, Minihaking. Onward to the east they came to Masketitong, the strong falls, and some went to the south. Those who crossed over above and below the falls entered the land of Winiki.

THAT account is more or less as the Indians gave it, so a clarification is in order. Here is an interpretation of the story easily understood by those acquainted with the geography of our country: The far distant country from which the Lenape came is Northeastern Asia. The glassy sea is the ice covering the Bering Strait. Into the region of caves was the Rocky Mountains and the land of the buffalo was the great plains to the eastward.

It is easy to identify the Great Water for the French missionaries named it Lake Superior. There the tide of migration divided. One division went north of the lakes and the other to the southward. This latter group encountered the snakes who were the Iroquois moving upward from the southwest. After conquering the snakes they crossed the Mississippi, which name they gave to that

river, and then moved on through the cornlands of the valley toward the land of the Rising Sun, the coastal area of the Atlantic Ocean. The strong falls was the head of tidewater at Trenton.

The Lenape crossed the river above and below the falls and came to the land of the Rising Sun in the area which is referred to as the land of Winaki, meaning in their language, sassafras land. This name has carried over from those early days in the word Wanaque and is now applied to the Newark Reservoir. Indians of this Algonquin group who went to the northward at Lake Superior reached the Land of the Rising Sun in Labrador, Canada East and New England and their offspring are found in the Eastern Algonquin Crees, Micmacs, Abenakes, Massachusetts, Narragansetts, Pequots and Mohegans, while the progeny of the Lenape south were Shawnees, Pamlico, Pohatan and Nanticokes. Practically all these Eastern Algonquins returned to the land of the Setting Sun before the westward pioneer movement of the paleface from across the sea.

THE Indians of New Jersey called themselves by the name Lenape. The pronunciation is "le-nah-pay," with a slight emphasis on the second syllable. A common usage of the name in early

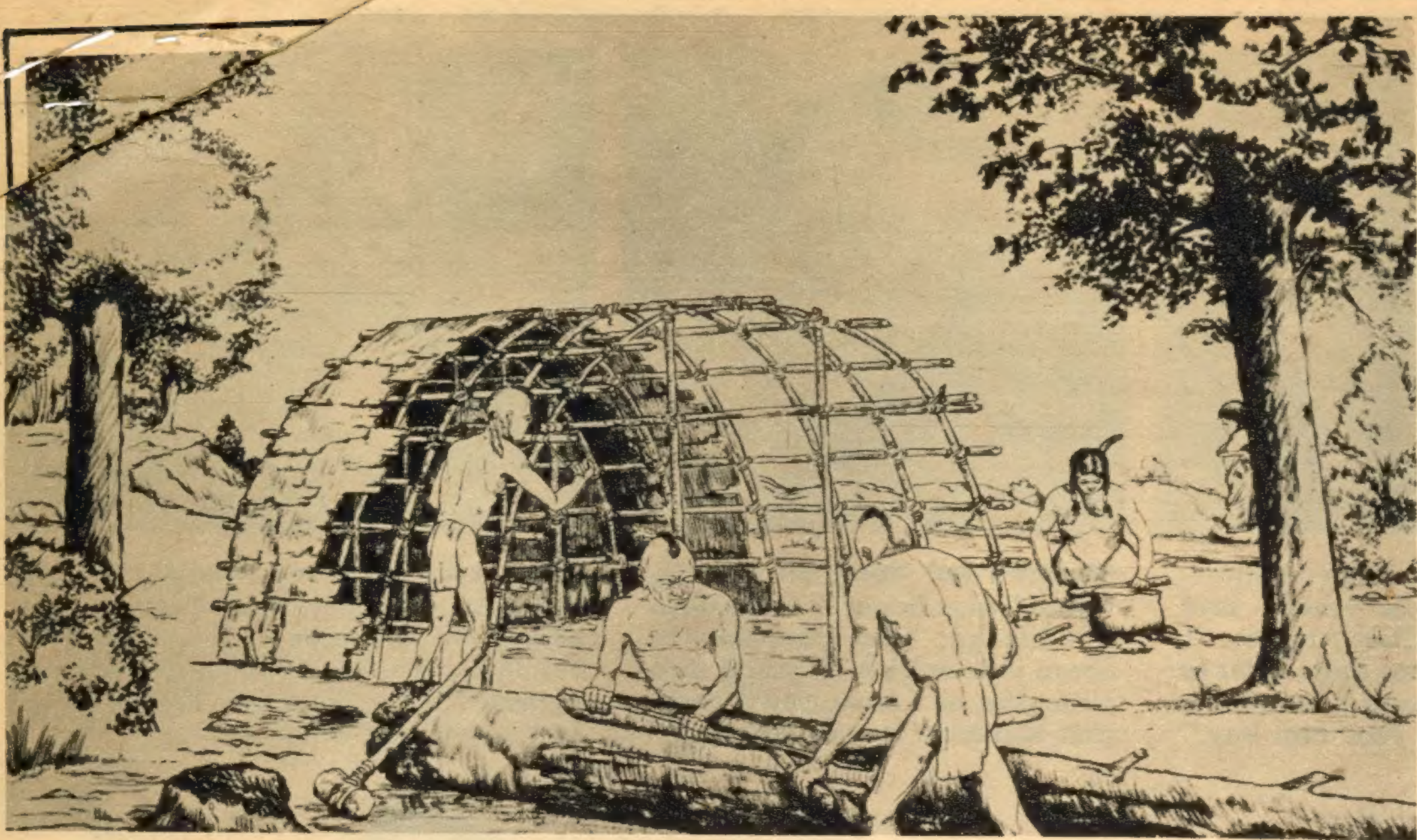
literature is Lenni Lenape. In more recent times, the Indians said "Len Lenape" to emphasize the name. In the Indian, as in many languages, it was the practice to repeat the first syllable for emphasis and sometimes an intervening syllable was added, as Lenni Lenape, but the name in common usage should be Lenape.

In early times these Indians were called Delawares, and herein lies a tale. Lenape women and the old men of the tribe would tell this story to the children:

When Lord Delaware came across the water to visit his friend John Smith, an exploring party was sent up the river which now bears the name of Delaware. They went as far as the Dutch village of Kildorpy, the early name of Trenton. This was at the falls. It will be noted that the name means in the Dutch, the little village on the kill. At this point the party met a group of Indians and the captain asked the sakima, or leader, his name. The answer was, Lenape.

This was a new word to the Dutch leader and through his interpreter the question was asked a second time, and the reply was "len-lenape." The different word still bothered the captain and a third request was made. Upon this gesture the sakima stoically stepped forward and spoke out in measured emphasis, "n'del-lowe len lenape." Then the query arose among them, what does this mean? The interpreter was informed that Lenape meant human being, len lenape was the emphatic form signifying that they were not only men, human beings, but important men. The third answer using the

OCTOBER 9, 1949



The Lenni Lenape lived in wigwams which they built of tree limbs and bark.

word n'del-lowe meant, "I say." Thus, the statement in the Lenape language means, "I say we are important human beings." These Indians believed they were descended directly from the first human beings on earth.

THE verb part of this phrase, dellows, sounded very much like Delaware and the exploring party was greatly elated over this, for, as they thought, it gave them good news to take back to Lord Delaware. On their return they ran to him and shouted: "Good news! We have discovered a group of Indians at 'The Falls' who already have heard of your fame. They

know Indian tribes by the name of the river valley in which they lived, the Lenape Indians probably would have acquired the name Delawares eventually anyway.

It should be noted that the Lenape or Delawares lived on the lower west side of the Hudson and in the Chesapeake area also. The name by which the Lenape knew the Delaware River was Lenapewihittuck, and the Hudson, the Moheganwihittuck. Thus, the Indians of New Jersey leave to white man the origin of their name Delawares.

IN the period of their discovery by white man the

central part and the Unalachtigo, "the people who lived near the ocean," inhabited the southern portion. Heading each sub-tribe was a chieftain called "sakima" but the leader of the Unami was considered chief of the whole Lenape tribe.

Each sakima had a council of elders to advise him and approve all undertakings. The powers of chief were decidedly limited. Each sub-tribe had its own hunting or fishing grounds and respected the rights of one another. Despite these restrictions the keynote of their government was liberty and the white settlers found them to be friendly, fair-thinking individuals who were willing to share their meager fare.

ALTHOUGH the Lenapes had little in the way of clothing or suitable shelter and had to struggle continuously to preserve their very existence before the white man they were a fairly healthy people slightly above our average height. Unfortunately, like most Indians, the Lenape were easy prey for white man's diseases and liquor which, coupled with continuing migrations, soon depleted their numbers.

NEXT WEEK: Where New Jersey's Indians lived before and after the coming of the white man.

can themselves by your name, 'The Delawares.'" This false report has never been eradicated. It could not be true for the Lenapes did not have the sound of the letter "r" in their language. However, the Swedes and Dutch were accustomed to substitute r's for l's, n's and w's. Thus the Swedes said Renape for Lenape and the Dutch Raritan for Wawitan. That is why today it is a common occurrence to find Indian words in the Lenape area with r's substituted for l's, n's and w's.

Since that time the Lenape Indians have been known as the Delawares. The river did take the name Delaware and since it was customary to

Lenape were known as a nation of three sub-tribes, the Munsee, the Unami and the Unalachtigo. The totem or tribal emblem of the Munsee was the wolf, p'tuksit, or round foot; of the Unami was the turtle, poke ungo, the crawler, and of the Unalachtigo, was the wild turkey, or pallaoook (he who swallows without chewing). In his translation of the Walam Olum, Rafinesque found that these animals were regarded as protectors by the tribes they represented.

The Munsee or "the people of the stony country" lived in the northern part of New Jersey, the Unami or "the people down the river" occupied the

SUB-TRIBES OF LENNI-LENAPE



(As Memorialized by Richard C. Adams)

The Munsee Clan — Totem, the wolf (p'tuk sit, round foot).

"The wolf band comes from children
Whom the she wolf nursed with care
And thus restored the children
Who were giv'n up in despair.
Her howling brought the hunters
To the babies where they lay
So a band among the people
Is the wolf clan of today."

NEWARK SUNDAY NEWS

The Unami Clan — Totem, the turtle (poke un go, the crawler).

"When the waters were so mighty
As to reach the mountains high
And it seemed that all creation
Surely then was doomed to die
Came the turtle to our rescue
Brought us safely unto land
For the Manito had sent him
Now we're called 'The Turtle clan.'"

The Unalachtigo Clan — Totem, the turkey (pal la ook, he who swallows without chewing).

"When the tribe was once in danger
A wild turkey gave alarm
And the warriors met the bowman
With the fury of a storm.
To a maiden in a vision
Did the turkey show the plan
And we call all her descendants
To this day, 'The turkey clan.'"

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